

Message Text

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ACTION INR-07

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FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3331

INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

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1. DR. H.W. TAMBIAH, SRI LANKA'S HIGH-COMMISSIONER-
DESIGNATE TO CANADA, WAS BORN MAY 28, 1906 AND COMES FROM
PROMINENT TAMIL CHRISTIAN FAMILY OF JAFFNA IN
NORTHERN SRI LANKA.

2. HE HAS HAD DISTINGUISHED LEGAL CAREER BEGINNING
AS ADVOCATE OF SUPREME COURT IN 1934. IN 1954 HE WAS
APPOINTED COMMISSIONER OF ASSIZE AND IN 1961 BECAME
SUPREME COURT JUDGE. UPON RETIREMENT IN 1968, SIERRA
LEONE INVITED HIM TO SERVE AS JUDGE ON ITS COURT OF
APPEALS AND LATER ON ITS SUPREME COURT WHERE HE SERVED
UNTIL 1971.

3. TAMBIAH HOLDS PH.D. (1954) AND LL.D. (1972), BOTH
FROM LONDON UNIVERSITY. HE IS AUTHOR OF LAWS AND
CUSTOMS OF THE TAMILS OF CEYLON, SINHALA LAW AND
CUSTOMS, AND PRINCIPLES OF CEYLON LAW. HE HAS HAD
CONTINUING INTEREST IN TAMIL ACADEMIC RESEARCH AND
WAS FORMERLY PRESIDENT OF CEYLON BRANCH OF INTERNATIONAL
ASSOCIATION OF TAMIL RESEARCH. HE ATTENDED
CONFERENCE OF THAT BODY IN MADRAS (1968) AND PARIS (1970).

4. HIS APPOINTMENT AS HIGH COMMISSIONER TO CANADA
IS HIS FIRST DIPLOMATIC ASSIGNMENT. WHILE SERVING
IN SIERRA LEONE HE WAS FRIENDLY WITH THEN AMERICAN
AMBASSADOR, ANDREW CORRY, WHO LATER BECAME AMBASSADOR TO
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SRI LANKA.

VAN HOLLEN

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NNN

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